

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI

Feng Shui by Maria
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Children and Creativity in While Sheltering in Place

The Pandemic is keeping everyone home, and parents are working double time home schooling their children. Creativity is at its highest with people baking, painting, playing games, gardening and participating in numerous home projects.

These adventures into creativity can lead you into new friendships, careers and joyful self-exploration. Every home has within it an area for fun, hobbies, special interests, and childlike qualities; an area where the “whimsical” is displayed and celebrated. In Feng Shui this area known as the Children and Creativity area which encourages us to fully express ourselves in order to achieve joy and satisfaction. This area helps us to nurture and grow that energizing creative spark that lies within all of us, irrespective of the creative medium. Parents can also experience this energizing and magical satisfaction while encouraging their children to grow, learn and explore through creative expression. Think of the joy in children’s faces when they can see that we are proud of their works of art.

Some ideas for working with your children during this time:

- 1) Keep routines in place - sticking to a regular schedule is key, even when you’re at home all day. It may help to print out a schedule and go over it as a family each morning. Setting a timer will help kids know when activities are about to begin or end. A sample schedule created by my daughter for our 7 year old grandson:

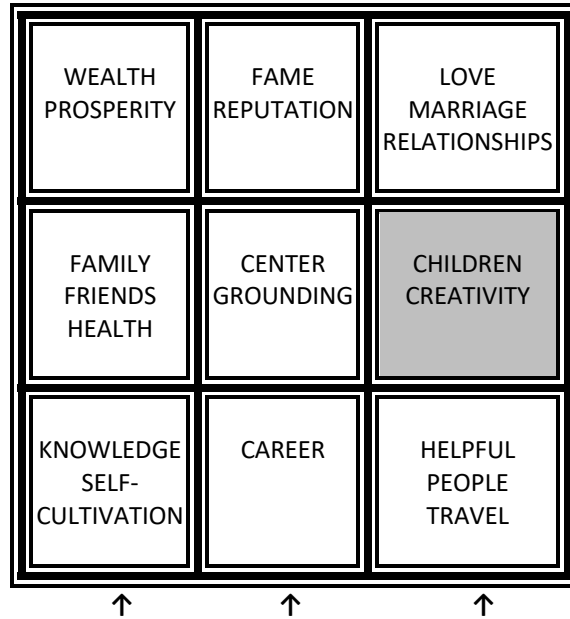
9:00-9:30 morning PE (Yoga, dance, trampoline, bike, karate, golf)
9:30-11:00 – Core Work including Math, Reading, Journal Writing
11:00-11:45 Extra Curricular (Science, Social Studies, Art, Cooking, Baking)
11:45-1:00 Lunch and clean up
1:00-1:30 Quiet rest time
1:00-2:00 Math/Reading flashcards , Workbook or On Line Schoolwork
2:00 Life Skills – Chores
- 2) Be creative about activities - Incorporate new activities into your routine, like doing a puzzle, gardening or baking. Build in exercise.
- 3) Stay in touch virtually - Keep your support network strong. Socializing plays an important role in regulating your mood and helping you stay grounded. And the same is true for your children. Let kids use social media (within reason) and Skype or FaceTime to stay connected to peers even if they aren’t usually allowed to do so.
- 4) Make plans - Making plans helps you visualize the near future. Even better, assign kids tasks, like picking the restaurant you’re going to order from, that will help them feel that they are part of the plan and making a valuable contribution to the family.
- 5) Everyone pitches in - Everyone who can pitch in, should. Give kids age appropriate jobs. For example, teens might be able to help mind younger siblings when both parents have to work. Most children can set the table, help keep communal spaces clean, do dishes or take out the trash. Even toddlers can learn to pick up their own toys. Working as a team will help your whole family stay busy.

This is a time to be creative and be flexible; find a balance that works for your family. This is a time to also incorporate some easy Feng Shui tools to spark your creativity. Begin by locating the Children and Creativity area of your home as identified through the Bagua.

The Feng Shui Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, is represented as a grid of nine sectors. The Bagua comes from the Chinese philosophy, “The I Ching,” and literally means “eight trigrams”, with the center for grounding and centering.

In the Feng Shui Bagua the Children and Creativity area is located in the right middle side of your home/office. In the “I Ching” the Children and Creativity area of your home or business is called “Joyous Lake” because it is associated with the qualities of pleasure,

generosity and encouragement. We need a great deal of encouragement and admiration, as well as a “lightness of being” to help creative expression blossom. The flowering of creativity is a joyful experience when it occurs through kindness and encouragement.



ENTRANCE QUADRANT

Enhancements in this area are particularly helpful if: You are trying to get pregnant, you want to become more creative in general, or are involved in a creative project, you feel creatively blocked and would like more energy, you would like to explore your inner child and creativity, you want to improve your relationship with your children, and especially at this time you want to be creative in your home while staying safe.

Enhancements for enhancing the Children and Creativity area inside your home or business:

- * Art, photos, collages or posters depicting children
- * Supplies used for creating things, such as art and craft materials
- * Whimsical, playful and colorful items, toys, stuffed animals
- * Things that have a personal association to Children and Creativity, such as handmade items and memorabilia of your own childhood
- * Items in colors of white or pastel
- * Things made of metal such as furniture, lamps, candle holders, frames, figurines, jewelry
- * Quotes, affirmations and sayings pertaining to Children and Creativity

Enhancements for enhancing the Children and Creativity area outside your home or business:

- * Whimsical garden art such as fairies, animals, whirligigs
- * Play structures such as swings and sandboxes
- * A children’s garden, where they had the opportunity to select, plant and tend their plants, or planting a tree when a child is born.
- * Items, flowers, plants in the white and/or pastel color spectrum
- * Rocks and stones
- * Circular or oval shapes

Feng Shui at work:

A few years ago I heard about a woman who was at a loss on how to enhance her Children and Creativity area because it was her laundry room, and she felt it was strictly utilitarian. She did not realize that it was a diamond in the rough. After learning more about Feng Shui, she decided to enhance the room with a collage of pictures of all her children and grandchildren. She already had the white metal of the washer and dryer and now added representations of her loved ones. Laundry is no longer a chore; she beams and is reenergized each time she’s in there. I loved this idea, and since my laundry room is also in this area, I chose to make large photo collages of my daughter’s pictures from birth on. Knowing that she is an Earth element person, I chose to further nurture her by painting the walls a pastel yellow and adding a yellow orchid and whimsical art. I love doing laundry now, and my daughter is thriving! She now has given us two beautiful grandchildren whose pictures now add to the whimsy.

Children's bedrooms are particularly nurturing in this area of the home; particularly if the colors are kept in pastel hues which are more calming than bright primary colors. Self-esteem posters are wonderful additions. Serenity is the keynote here. When you calm the bedroom down you calm the child down too.

As the Coronavirus crisis continues parents everywhere are trying to keep their children healthy and occupied. It's vitally important during this time to calm your fears, manage your stress and keep the peace. Feng Shui can help nurture the creative energy within you. Whether alone, or with your family look to this area to help spark your inner child and bring out the joy within you!

Affirmations and Inner Work:

Remember that in Feng Shui, intent plays a significant role in enhancing any area of your home or business. That's why all enhancements need to be made with intentionality; written or stated affirmations expressed as if they are already happening are very important. Examples of affirmations for the Children and Creativity area:

"I easily and joyfully express my creativity", "My inner child is safe and happy", "My children are safe, healthy and thriving during this shelter in place."

For questions or home consultations email at mtmccull@aol.com and put "Feng Shui" on the subject line, or visit my website at www.fengshuibymaria.com, (where you can read past columns and learn more enhancement ideas), or **Facebook "Feng Shui by Maria"**, where I post pictures as examples to enhancements.

* Check out my **BLOG** – Just go to the website and click on "Blog": You can view many pictures and, I will respond to your questions quickly.

Maria McCullough is the owner / founder of Feng Shui by Maria (www.fengshuibymaria.com) and is a speaker and educator with over 20 years of experience. She specializes in residential, landscape and business consultations. She is a graduate of the Western School of Feng Shui and has personally trained with Terah Kathryn Collins, founder of the Western School of Feng Shui, specializing in Essential Feng Shui® and author of numerous books including "The Western Guide to Feng Shui."